

IRC News

033 - December 2009

Information Resource
Center Abidjan

Tel. (225) 22-49-42-49

FAX (225) 22-49-42-19

Written by the IRC staff

Email: cca_ci@state.gov



The IRC celebrated its 45th (1964 – 2009) anniversary by organizing several activities to mark this long term cooperation in information and education.

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CELABRATING THE BOOK OF THE YEAR 2009

On December 17, 2009, PAS organized its Book of Year event based on the Nouveaux Horizons title by John Kotter and Holger Rathgeber's *Our Iceberg is Melting: Changing and Succeeding under Any Conditions*, selected by the IRC contacts and patrons as the most popular book read, checked out, and requested throughout the year. Although this book was discussed in July, 2009 within the framework of the IRC Book of the Month series, the program was attended by over one hundred people, including government officials, corporate managers, religious and NGO leaders, youth, Media professionals, and members of civil society. The PAO, Ms. Sita Liane Chakrawarti, underlined the significance of the topic in her words of welcome. The panelists, Mr. Ouattara Issa, a Chief Executive Officer, and IRC, Marie-Laure Angoran, presented the tools and strategies for successful change described through an eight step process, starting from finding the

critical issue to implementing the needed change, whatever the circumstances. These strategies include creating a sense of urgency, building up an accountable leading team, developing vision and plan for change, communicating thoughtfully, empowering others to act, producing short-term wins, being persistent, and creating a new culture to maintain the changes necessary. The attendees' interactions proved the importance of the program. They testified that the book is a must-read as it covers all the steps to success in a frequently changing world. Many suggested a follow-up conference for political party leaders and governmental institution heads to inspire and raise people's awareness about the crucial challenges for a successful Ivorian presidential election. They added that the lessons learned from this book are applicable to all and at any level of life.



Partial view of the audience



PAO Chakrawarti, Mr. Ouattara and
Mrs. Angoran Marie-Laure

YOUNG READERS IN THE IRC

In the framework of the Information Resource Center (IRC) 45th anniversary celebration, PAS Abidjan received 75 primary school students and teachers from 'Ecole l'Ardoise' for a visit to the IRC kids' section opened in 2009. The December 17, 2009, program aimed at promoting and encouraging reading among young children to stimulate thinking and develop leadership capacity. The PAO, Sita Liane Chakrawarti welcomed the children, inviting them to give their opinion about a good leader and his role. Following the PAO's greeting, the children watched a documentary giving a historical overview of the development of books over the years and a DVD on American diversity. Then, during the reading session, the children were delighted to discover the variety of books in French and English dealing with general and specific subjects such as '*Tous les enfants du monde ont les mêmes droits*', '*L'imagerie du corps humain*', easy readers biographies on famous Americans like *Abraham Lincoln*, *Martin Luther King Jr.*, *Rosa Parks*, and books on HIV/AIDS. The kids were visibly pleased with the program and requested follow-up visits to the IRC. One of the school representatives declared that this was exactly the kind of program they had been looking for the students. PAS gave the host institution the French version of IIP Publications including a set of pamphlets and 75 copies of the E-journal titled '*American Teenagers*.'





American Libraries Program

As part of IRC Abidjan's 45th anniversary celebration, PAS organized a conference lectured by Mrs. Tiony Srami Cecile, the President of the Association of Information Professionals in Cote d'Ivoire (APSID-CI) and participant in the 2009 International Visitor Leadership Program - American Libraries. The presentation designed for information specialists including documentalists, librarians, archivists, and media outlet resource center managers brought together 40 attendees on December 17, 2009. The speaker enthusiastically demonstrated the role and importance of libraries in the American society. She said she was very impressed by the American citizen's commitment to library development in all geographic and social levels of the nation through voluntarism and donations. Citing the Library of Congress, she affirmed that information is a high priority for the American administration. She insisted on the uniqueness of the United States libraries for their exemplary setting and equipment, services, customer orientation, children and minority-oriented programs, and the use of social media. She added that the highlight of her visit was the American Library Association annual conference that she attended in Chicago, IL. According to her,

this event reinforced her understanding of the key role of libraries in a nation. She therefore urged the Ivorian information specialists to advocate for the library profession and to network through a sustainable organizational system. She provided a properly-designed print report enhanced by impressive photographs taken while visiting the Unites States through the International Visitor Leadership Program-American Libraries held from June 26 to July 19, 2009. She said her report is available for participants to check for more details. The participants commended this inspiring and informative exchange. They extended their gratitude to the US Mission for its efforts to promote mutual understanding and knowledge sharing through such an award-winning professional exchange program. They added that social media are an invaluable tool that they will use to maximize their information resource services and programs. They confirmed that Mrs. Tiony's experience was very inspiring and will certainly improve their ways of library and information management. PAS presented to the participants 40 copies of the French version of the E-journal '*Media Making Change.*'



**Panelists: Mrs. Tiony Cecile and
Rouamba Debora**



Scientists and medical doctors in the IRC

On December 17, 2009, PAS hosted an orientation session for Medical Doctors to the Information Resource Center (IRC) on the occasion of its 45th anniversary commemoration. The program meant to introduce the IRC scientific and medical resources to this target audience attracted 100 physicians from the National Institute of Public Health, a partner institution to Abraham Lincoln Institute. Ms. Sita Liane Chakrawarti in her welcome address expressed her delight at seeing so many enthusiastic participants. She invited them to take advantage of this tailor-made program according to their specific needs. Following the PAO, the IRC staff, through a comprehensible PowerPoint presentation, demonstrated the services, programs, products, databases, and online resources enabling healthcare professionals to identify and address their research requirements. A special focus

was put on the following online resources and databases: HINARI, the World Health Organization database, the State Department funded FirstSearch database, and the America.gov Science and Technology section. The attendees applauded the program and admitted that it will help them refresh and reinforce their skills. As practitioners, they were amazed to discover the abundant and accurate handy medical resources that provide them with the latest advancements in health science and technology. They agreed that this inspiring experience will help them ensure better healthcare results for the population and contribute to the improvement of the Ivorian healthcare system. They took advantage of their presence at the IRC to apply for IRC membership. The participants appreciated the 100 copies of the E-journal '*Life saving Vaccines*' that PAS presented to them.



PAO Sita L. Chakrawarti



IRCT Kassy-Coulibaly



World AIDS Day 2009: ‘Youth Against AIDS’

To celebrate the World AIDS Day, PAS Abidjan organized on December 2, 2009, a conference based on ‘*Juste pour goûter*’, a short story subsidized by PEPFAR and John Hopkins Bloomberg School of Public Health. The Eighty-five participants included high school students, educators, media professionals, and Mrs. Patricia Ajavon, The Johns Hopkins University Program Coordinator in Cote d’Ivoire. Before the conference began, the participants were shown a collection of short movies titled ‘*African Transformation*’ telling tales from HIV positive people. The PAO, Sita Liane Chakrawarti delivered the welcome address focusing on the urgent need for kids to engage personally in the fight against HIV/AIDS epidemics. Panelists included Ms. Caroline Sloan, an American Fulbright student specializing in HIV/AIDS research, Mrs. Zeguela Bagayoko, president of an association of Media Women advocating for HIV/AIDS eradication, Mr. Kone Doh, Dr. Coulibaly Seydou, and Mr. N’Dohou Luisiano, authors for three stories from the short story ‘*Juste pour goûter*.’ Ms. Sloan provided first-hand information about the disease and recommendations relating to its transmission, antiretroviral treatment, and prevention. She shared the

American youth experience on HIV/AIDS and documented her presentation with statistics of people living with AIDS in the world and in Cote d’Ivoire, based on the United Nations 2008 report. Other presenters also shared their stories depicting experiences inspired by true stories of people affected by HIV/AIDS. The panelists jointly appealed to the young audience to take individual responsibility to cope with the disease, based on the instructions they received from the conference. The highlight of the session was the teenagers’ interactions. They applauded the frequent awareness-raising activities initiated by the US mission in Cote d’Ivoire in order to contribute to the decrease and the eradication of HIV/AIDS infection. They unanimously agreed on the methods of HIV prevention including testing, use of condoms, avoiding risky and premature sex affairs, grassroots education, and abstinence as the most effective preventive measures. They promised to spread out the message in their school communities. The PAO recommended the school leaders to organize follow-up activities to commit the kids’ participation to the struggle against this global disease. The national radio covered the event.



Panelists: Ms. Sloan, Dr. Kone, Mrs. Bagayoko, Dr. Coulibaly, Mr. N’Dohou and PAO Sita Liane Chakrawarti

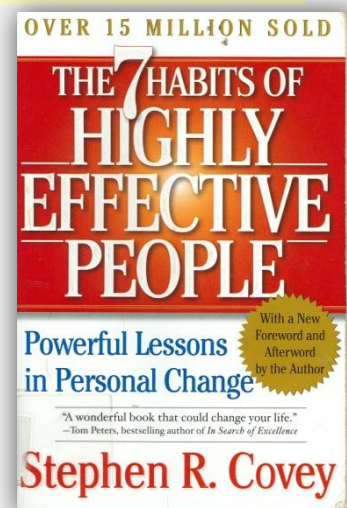
Maximize Knowledge at Work: 'The 7 Habits of Highly Effective People'

On December 3, 2009, the Human Resource Office and PAS jointly organized a training designed to empower Locally Employed Staff (LES) professional capacities. The participants included forty employees from all the Embassy sections who enthusiastically attended the training session based on Stephen Covey's *'The 7 Habits of Highly Effective People.'* Following the opening remarks by the DCM, Julia R. Stanley, the PAO, Sita Liane Chakrawarti introduced the program by providing a comprehensible overview of the topic and focusing on the importance of achieving the award-winning seven habits proposed by the author. The guest speaker Myra Michele Brown, the Regional Information Resource Officer based in Accra, expanded on the topic through an excellent and well-designed PowerPoint presentation, introducing now and then, instructive movies. She started by carefully defining the lexicon relating to the topic, thus preparing the participants for a better understanding.

She successfully and entertainingly conveyed Stephen's message enclosed in his book as follows:

- Be proactive
- Begin with the end in mind
- Put first things first
- Think win / win
- Seek first to understand, then to be understood
- Synergize
- Sharpen the saw

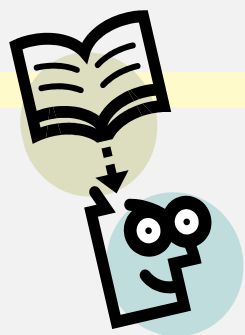
Through practical exercises and discussions, the trainees actively participated to the session. The participants' reactions and contributions proved the program to be very significant and useful. They rated the training as a top quality one and agreed that it requires constant discipline and firm commitment to achieve the '7 habits of highly effective people.' They declared that this training provided them with major recommendations to address personal and professional problems either in their workplace or in their family and community life.



THE HISTORY OF BLACK MUSIC IN THE UNITED STATES



On December 4, 2009, IRO Myra Brown delivered a lively conference on the History of Black Music in the United States to 115 participants including university teachers and graduate students.



COMING SOON!!!

January 08 – Immersion session with the University of Cocody

January 13 – Webchat on World Digital Library

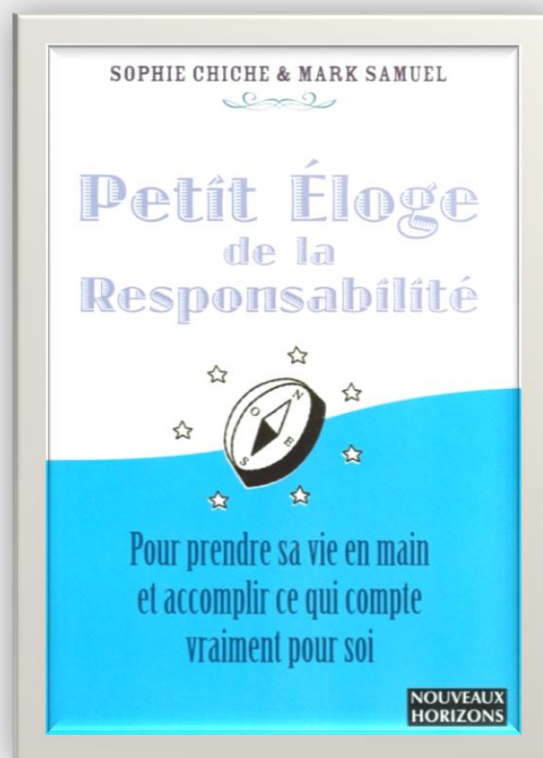
January 15 – Immersion session with students from Bafing

January 20 – Webchat on Freedom of Expression and Religion

January 21 – Young Readers with la Madeleine

January 27 – Book of Month of January ‘Personal Accountability’

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your comment and
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or in French on the IRC
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